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1911





Thoughts at Random

“Uncle Joe” Henderson



"UNCLE JOE."

Thoughts at Random

A Collection of Poems

BY J. R. HENDERSON

PRICE 25 CENTS

Copies sent Post Paid on receipt of Price

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BY J. R. HENDERSON, RILEY, WIS.

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PREFACE.

To those who love to read at rhyme,
And in that way spend their leisure time;
And to all who strive to make others happy by word or look,
I cheerfully dedicate this little book.

—*The Author.*

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SONG OF THE WISCONSIN BOY.

Come friends now and listen
While a song I will sing,
And pleasure to each one
I am sure it will bring.
I will sing of my birthplace
And my heart's filled with joy,
To say Wisconsin the state,
And I a true Badger boy.

Chorus.

Wisconsin, Wisconsin the state of my birth,
To me the loveliest spot on the face of the earth;
The home of the Badger, the Beaver and Deer;
And the wide spreading oak in abundance grows here.

In her rivers and lakes
Fine fish do abound;
And the bright sparkling mineral
They dig from the ground.
The sheep, horses, and cattle
They graze on the hill
Drink from the spring brook
Of cold water their fill.

You hear the hum of the bee
As she gathers her store,
To provide for the winter
When the summer is o'er;
And the farmer that tills
The fine fertile field,
In the harvest he reaps
A bountiful yield.

Now it is fifty years;
It was May Forty-eight,
She was admitted to this union
As a full sister state.
We will sing on her semi-centennial
With hearts full of glee,
And hope her full centennial
We will all live to see.

ADVICE TO HIS FATHER.

Here's the advice Uncle Joe gave his father on the occasion of the old gentleman's seventy-eighth birthday:

Dear father, now that you are seventy-eight,
Your knees are stiff and your back's not straight,
The blood through your veins it courses slow,
And not so warm as it was long, long ago:
Now as you have grown so feeble and old,
The nights are frosty and the days are cold,
Here is a little advice I will give to you,
And tell you what I think you ought to do.
Take your bible or some other book,
Select some warm and cozy nook,
Where with the specks astraddle your nose,
Sometimes you read, sometimes dose.
If you think you are sitting too long still,
You can get the tobacco box your pipe to fill.
A match you will find in the box there on the wall,
And on the stove give it a scrawl.
Now there is the fire your pipe to redden, [hidden.
And quietly smoke away all troubles that in your breast are
I'll look after the chores, take you no fear,

For you looked after them for me for many a year;
Everything for your comfort must I do,
For years ago you did it for me, now I'll do it for you.
And those little children around here that you see,
I am doing it for them, some day they will do it for me,
At least I will give them an example of what they ought to do,
When I am old and feeble and bent down like you,
And it may be, sir, in some far distant day,
When I am feeble with sickness or with age grown gray,
They will read this advice that I have given to you,
And ask their old father the same thing to do.
And when this life is ended and you are laid away,
To moulder again back to old mother clay,
I'll have this satisfaction which none can gainsay,
That I did my duty to my father while with me he did stay,
And I'll not fear to meet you in Heaven above,
Where all is true kindness, cemented with love.
For I say to you father, and to all persons living,
That true kindness and love is the highway to Heaven.
Then let us be kind to the old, the weak and the young,
And angels will guide us when the Lord, He says come.

TRIBUTE TO HIS WIFE MAGGIE.

Wisconsin, the home of my adoption,
No other spot on earth so dear to me;
love her woods, her hills, her lakes,
And her world famed Uni—versity!

Every one born within this state
Are heirs to an honest heart,
And her flower-clad hills and rippling rills
To them love and kindness doth impart.

I know whereof I speak,
For my wife, Maggie, now has silver'd hair.
Forty years having come and gone
Since here she first breathed the air.

Twenty of them she's been my wife,
And poured out the supper tea.
Every morn when she rises from her bed,
She asks her Lord to bless and protect me.

She prays to Him who reigns above,
To Him who sits upon the eternal throne.
To encircle with His arms of love,
Her children and her home.

She prays that every dying soul
May hear salvation's call,
And every living sinner from pole to pole
At her Lord's feet may fall.

Oh! sweet content, long I sought your face,
As alone I scrambled up life's hill, steep and scraggy,
But I never got a glimpse of your abiding place
Until joined in wedlock with my peerless Maggie!

MATRIMONIAL POEM.

This poem was delivered on the occasion of the marriage of
David Ryan and Maggie Brown, Sept. 28, 1895.

Neighbors and friends we have met today,
At the home of Michael Brown;
To see his daughter Maggie give her hand away,
And wear the bridal gown.

To see her prepare to leave the place of her birth,
This pleasant paternal home;
To go out into the world with David Ryan,
To make a happy one of her own.

We will each take her gently by the hand,
And wish her long life to enjoy:
For we are sure her cup of happiness will overflow,
With David Ryan for her boy.

And David we'll take him by the hand,
And give him a hearty shake,
For we know that he'll be kind to Maggie,
All for her parents' sake.

For when they saw you come from church today,
Tears of joy down her mother's cheeks did run;
When father whispered in her ear,
"Lost a daughter but got another son."

Now David, here's a staff for you,
You don't need it yet I know;
But sir, I hope you will live to appreciate,
This trifle from old Joe.

When man is young here he goes,
The woods resound with his merry laugh
But when he is old this is the way,
It is then he needs the staff.

Maggie lass, here's a tea pot for you,
Its use you quite well know;
Long may you live to sip the tea,
That from its spout will flow.

And when you are in your own home,
A home where there'll ne'er be a gibe or quarrel:
If I around should chance to roam,
Give me a drop out of the barrel.

Now, long life and happiness to you both,
As along life's road you go;
And may you love one another to the end,
Is the sincere wish of Uncle Joe.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Here is what I have to say about Abraham Lincoln on his birthday, Feb. 12:

The American people meet today
In churches and halls kind words to say
In praise of him,
Who was the one to plan and lay out the way
To sweep from our land disgrace and sin.

While in his youth he split the rail
And threshed the grain with his home-made flail,
All this to make him stronger
To speak the words that would make rebellion quail,
And nations at him wonder.

He was the one that spoke the word,
"Freemen now unsheath your sword,
I must proclaim emancipation,
And with the help of a true and living God,
We'll make this a free and united nation."

The war went on for four long years,
The eyes of mothers and daughters bedimmed with tears
From the rising until the setting of the sun;
The mother for the father she had not seen for years,
The daughter for the brother or some other one.

When at length Gettysburg was won,
When through battle clouds brightly the sun
Shone from on high,
When slaves rejoiced, their freedom's come,
He had to die.

Slain by an assassin's hand,
Without a moment's warning before his God to stand,
No farewell could he say;
Causing profound sorrow throughout our land
Even to this day.

Abraham Lincoln, for thee we mourn,
The country you loved will that love return;
Calm and peaceful be your repose,
For America only when she to embers burn
Shall cease to speak your praise in rhyme and prose.

EBEN COLLINS' SILVER WEDDING.

Spoken Dec. 14, 1895, at their residence.

Twenty-five years ago today
You promised one another;
You promised before God and man
You would live this life together.

And during the five-and-twenty years
You have passed up the hill of life,
Eben Collins has proved himself an honest man
And you, an industrious wife.

And today we have met, at this, your home,
A home filled with peace and plenty,
The tables loaded down with sweets
And a decanter, not half empty.

Mrs. Collins, should we give you a choice tonight
Of some titled duke or peer,
Your hand in his again you would place
And say: "I'll take my Eben dear."

Now we'll give your husband that self-same chance
To select the daughter of some lord or seer,
His hand again in yours he would place
And say: "I'll take my Ella dear."

And should we all live another twenty-five years,
As I hope and trust we will,
We'll come again to your happy home
Knowing you love one another still.

It will not be the fickle, amorous love
Of fifty years before,
But a calmer and undying love
Of two that are near four score.

Now, friends, today let us eat and drink
Until we have got our fill,
Then to our homes let us haste away,
Loving one another still.

ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE ROBBIE COLLINS.

The following is a little poem on the death of Robert Collins, who died at his home in Verona, Sept. 26, 1895:

At the home of Eben Collins
There is sorrow tonight,
For malignant diphtheria
Rages there in its might;
And a father and mother
Alone pray to their God,
To spare the life
Of their dear little Rob.

No neighbor, no friend
Is allowed to be there,
To speak words of comfort
Or their grief for to share;
And his last little request
They have to deny,
To shake hands with brothers and sisters
A farewell goodbye.

Together they watch
Through that long Autumn night,
Doing all that they can
The disease for to fight;
At three o'clock in the morning
Comes the final heart throb,
And they pray, accept of his spirit
Oh, our true loving God.

They are there all alone
Their boy he is dead,
Quietly they prepared him
For his last little bed;

And in the coffin his body
They gently placed,
While tears gush from their eyes
And run down from their face.

It's all over now
The father he said,
As with trembling hand
He made fast the lid,
But for days and for weeks
You could hear a sigh and a sob,
As a fond mother mourns
For her dear little Rob.

Death casts a gloom o'er our homes
Come when it may,
But a thousand times worse
When it comes in this way;
And I hope you will all earnestly
Pray to your God,
That no more of your number
Pass under this rod.

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY.

Spoken at the home of R. E. Beat, on the occasion of his mother's 75th birthday.

Neighbors and friends, we have met today,
To pleasantly pass a few hours of our life away.
To eat and drink and take a smoke,
And with one another to crack a joke.

For our friend and neighbor, Robert Beat,
Made up his mind some friends to treat.
For today his mother is seventy-five,
And few born that day are now alive.

And long may she live to enjoy this life,
With her son Robert and his good wife.
Live to see her little grandsons grow to be honest men,
An honor both to her and them.

My wish is that she will live at least another twenty-five,
That her hens and turkeys with her thrive,
And that every egg she puts 'neath a hen that's cluckin'
Will produce a live bird before its broken.

Then she will say to Robert: "Go once more,
"And tell my friends I'm still to the fore.
"Tell them to come again and get their dinner,
"For today I've struck the even hunner."

And to go I'm sure we'll no be bleat,
And with her a hearty dinner eat,
Aye, even to drink a bowl of toddy,
And wish her weel, that kind auld body.

And now, my friends, let us all rise to our feet,
And with our right hand our right hand neighbor greet,
And as this will form a circle round,
May love and friendship in each heart be found.

And when Joe finishes this homely rhyme,
We'll sing that song called Auld Lang Syne,
And beforeen 'o us tak' our seat
We'll wish long life and happiness to Grandma Beat.

INSTITUTE SOUVENIR.

Delivered at the Opera Hall, Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, Tuesday evening, Jan. 28, 1896.

Mr. President, ladies, and farmers all,
Tonight we have met in the opera hall
To hear professors from the city,
Men who are glib to talk and very witty.

Men who are versed in farming lore,
Read books and pamphlets by the score;
Men who will tell us the scientific way
To till our farms and make them pay.

Tell us the best breed of cattle
That will fill our pockets with the yellow metal;
And the kind of cows to keep and milk,
To dress our old wives in imported silk.

Men that know the kind of sheep
That on the farm we ought to keep;
The kind that will grow the most wool makes the softest yarn
To knit into shirts and socks to keep us warm.

And the best breed of hogs in the whole lot
That the flesh will swell when your wife boils it in the pot.
Or if in the pan she wants to fry
It will not spit or spat into her eye.

Tell us the breed of hens that is sure to lay
One egg and sometimes two a day,
And the rooster that will rise in the early morn
And cackle loud for the hen when he has found the worm.

Now here is a truth I will tell to you:
That an institute conducted by J. M. True,
That for years after fruit will bear,
And all farmers will the profits share.

For he will tell us how to plow and hoe,
To make the potatoes and corn with vigor grow.
And where last year a tiny stalk grew,
This year a healthy one and perhaps two.

For he knows and will explain the way
That soon the mortgage we can pay;
And the renters on farms, worn to the stone,
Soon will own a fertile farm of their own.

And after you have heard it all,
And return home again from this opera hall;
If on the farm you would succeed,
To a little advice pray take heed.

Leave off the cup of social mirth
For more permanent joys beside the hearth;
Work in the field till it is dark,
Be up in the morning with the lark.

In the spring be the first to plow and sow,
It gives the seed longer time to sprout and grow.
And when the summer's past and the harvest is come,
You will find the early seeding takes the plum.

If you do this and mind what Uncle Richard said,
The foundation of your fortune's laid:

“He that plows deep while others sleep
Will have both corn to sell and keep;
And he that at the plow would thrive
Must either hold himself or drive.”

Thanking you all for your kind attention,
Though this is hardly worth my while to mention:
In farmer's phrase, "God bid you speed still daily to grow wiser,
And may you better tend your plow, than e'er did your adviser."

SOCIABLE INVITATION.

In Tom A. Stewart's shady grove,
Two miles west of Verona Station,
The S. S. children made up their minds
To have a day of recreation.

Mothers will bake up pies and cakes,
Fathers will toil the grove to clean,
For they will have a basket dinner,
Upon the grass so soft and green.

The Rev. Robb will open with prayer,
And pray with fervent grace,
He will ask the Lord to come and bless,
The children of this place.

Their parents, too, he'll not forget,
For we are all sinners here below,
Then will follow a declamation,
By one called Uncle Joe.

The singers, they will sing a song,
While Lottie on the organ play,
And Rev. Brown from a distant town,
Will deliver the oration of the day.

The dinner hour having now arrived,
We'll be seated in a circle around,
While love and amity will fill each heart
Upon that picnic ground.

And the rooster that crowed at 3 o'clock,
And blew a blast on his horn.
The old hen at his side to notify,
Again of the coming morn.

He too I know will sure be there,
But there will be no light in his eye,
He will be baked between two crusts,
And they'll call him chicken pie.

The dinner o'er the children then,
Each on the stand will take their place
And tell us what they have learned
About the Saviour of our race.

A stand will be upon the ground,
Built in the coolest shade,
Where every lad can treat his lass,
To ice cold lemonade.

Ice cream too they'll have in store,
For those who wish to buy,
Candy and peanuts for the young,
And pop for those that's dry.

Saturday, Aug. 10, the year '95,
Now that's the day that's set,
Come, one and all, and be sure you don't
The day and date forget.

THE WATERTOWN CONVENTION.

It was August 2nd, ninety-four
We stepped on the train and shut the door
And away we went
To Watertown, forty miles or more
Was our intent.

When we did there arrive,
We found we had quite a drive
To the Hotel Commercial,
Where Jones' headquarters he would strive,
Not to share the faith of our Bushnell.

Burr Jones he is our man from Dane,
John Leary will present his name
At the convention,
And we will work with might and main
To secure his nomination.

Over at the Hotel Daub,
I found Robert Kirkland; he's a lad
Of Scottish birth.
I spent an hour with him and his squad
In social mirth.

Robert he's a typical Scot,
On his fair name there's not a blot—
No, not one.
I wouldn't be surprised if there was a plot
To send him down to Washington.

There, too, the Barwigs have a room
Where you can, and that very soon,
Be at your ease.

And your face looks like a full moon,
Rising o'er the seas.

With the Barwig boys you could find no fault,
For they had a drop of the finest malt
That was brewed in Dodge.
And they wouldn't stop, tho' you'd say halt,
Till they'd fill your podge.

For four days the chairman stood upon the stand
And cried: Nine votes for Robert Kirkland.
Yes, that was it.
While Jones, fourteen he did land
And twenty for Carl Barwig.

But ballot five hundred and twenty-eight,
Robert Kirkland had his nine votes straight—
Not one more.
Jones ceased to be a running mate
And Barwig got the thirty-four.

And when the chair announced the nomination;
Kirkland he made an oration.
And so did Burr.
We picked up our traps, went to the station,
And off home with a whirr.

ODE TO WATERTOWN.

Watertown is a city mostly built of brick,
And through the center runs a creek;
Perhaps 'tis hardly worth my while to mention,
And yet it is the very place I would pick
To hold a congressional convention.

The inhabitants, too, they like to see
Their city honored as it should be
With men of fame,
Burr Jones, Cantwell, Quinn and Ogilvie,
And a dozen more from the county Dane.

Watertown, what city can I with thee compare
For honest men, and maids that's fair?

Of thee I am proud.
And I will ne'er forget when I was there
Until death shall my memory cloud.

And even then methinks my soul
Will yearn to come back and take a stroll
Along that street,
Which crosses the river and up a knoll
Where your christian people go their God to meet.

DAN McILVIE'S WELL.

It was during the drought of ninety-five,
When nothing green could live and thrive:
When springs and wells went dry,
Dahle water to Henderson had to drive—
A new well he would try.

So he hired one Dan McIlvie,
And an honest Irish lad is he—
To do the drilling;
And said "drill until plenty water here you see,
And for every foot you'll get six shilling."

For four days Dan worked at this well;
Every foot he went down he noted it well.

Another seventy-five cents to feed and clothe the baby

He never took a breathing spell
But cried, "Andrew; now I am ready!"

The fourth night while Dan lay in his bed,
His aching arms down by his side,
His fingers jarred, scarce could feel
Some villain took it into his head
To drop into the well a chunk of steel.

It was in the night, when all was still,
He crawled through the grove, raised up the drill,
And shame to tell,
He raised the steel with a demon's will
And dropped it down into the well.

For two days Dan worked hard and sore,
The steel to crush, the hole to bore
It was all in vain;
He had to move the machine two feet or more,
And start from the top again.

Dan was vexed and very mad;
He smiled at times, yet his heart was sad
To see his labor wasted in this way;
I'll put a curse upon his head,
And I'll do it now this very day."

"May his skin with boils be a solid scroll,
And vermin over him nightly crawl,
And in his body Satan and his angels reign,
Until in his agony he will bawl:
I'll never do the like again!"

Should the wretch this chance to see,
Or troubled with a guilty conscience as he should be,
And wish to change his way of livin',

Let him go and ask Dan McIlvie
And I know for sure he'll be forgiven.

For Dan, though by poverty pressed,
Has a forgiving heart in his Irish breast;
One that will forgive an erring brother;
He'll say, go, and your conscience have peace and rest,
But never do it to another.

Oh, may God hasten the time,
When in our land there will be no such crime
As stealing from the poor man's purse—
And forgive Dan in Thy good time
For speaking forth such a fearful curse.

MONOPOLY.

O, Fortune may it be thy pleasure,
To give me naught to do but at my leisure;
To make my thoughts to rhyme with a true measure,
Make my bread, my clothes and water sure.
You might then take all my golden treasure
And divide it 'mongst the poor.

Give it to him who is sore oppressed,
Who is scarce of food and scant of dress;
To him who by his neighbors pressed
For what he owes.
Give to him until he is with plenty blessed,
And better clothes.

For it's a sorrow thought that throughout our land,
Thousands who are deserving at thy hand,
On poverty's brink they've got to stand;
While vagabonds grow rich,

Forging around them monopoly's band,
To crowd their fellow in the ditch.

Methinks that soon will dawn the day,
When the laboring men will hold the sway,
And to trusts and monopolies they will say:
"We'll break your band,
And sweep you in utter dismay
From off our land."

Then man to man will a brother be,
Then mothers will shout and clap their hands with glee,
For no more lockouts or strikes they'll see
Throughout our land.
All will be love, friendship and prosperity,
When broken lies monopoly's band.

A TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM CHARLETON.

The Dane County board's composed of fifty men,
And when they meet they shake hands and then . . .
They all set to their work,
Some to figure with a pencil, some to write with a pen,
And others various bills sort.

The senior member of this county board
Is a man who at one time carried a sword,
His country's honor to defend.
He still loves his country and his Lord,
And to every man a friend.

He is six feet tall and a few inches more,
His head is covered with age's frosty hoar,
For that it's all the better.

It's jammed chockful of legal lore,
He knows it, every word and letter.

When a member wants some legal advice
He goes to him and in a thrice
They've got the information desired.
He'll give it to them slice after slice,
And never once get tired.

To be led and directed by such an honest light,
We have no fear but what we'll do right;
Fair and honest between man and man.
And our works may always be shown to the light;
We fear no critic's scan.

He's long been the acknowledged leader of board;
No man had e'er cause to doubt his word;
He's as honest as the day is long,
As true as the steel that was his sword,
His name is William Charleton.

IN MEMORY OF SAMUEL McCAUGHEY.

Ah death, once more you have come around,
To have build in your city another mound,
With a marble block to bear the inscription;
Here Samuel McCaughey's dust may be found
On the day of resurrection.

Oh, how could you be so bold,
As on that young man to lay your hand so cold,
And make us grieve today;
As we laid him in the grave again to mold
Back to kindred clay.

Sammie, now that you have gone,
The day, the week seems twice as long,
For your face no more I'll see;
Until I meet you around Christ's throne
In Etern—ity.

For the book of books it tells us plain,
That all who believe in Him who in heaven does reign,
And from that faith does not sever;
Though dead to earth they shall live again
And sing the praise of their Lord forever.

THE STAFF.

Spoken on being presented with one by his old friend, John McDonald.

Kind friend, accept of many thanks,
For this gift of yours to ease my shanks;
This staff to steady me down the hill of life,
I'll use it until I join the majority's ranks,
And leave this world of grief and strife.

You saw with your perceptive eye,
That the top of life's hill I was drawing nigh;
In truth, I am there already,
And down its incline swiftly must fly,
I needed this staff to keep me steady.

A young man just passed his 'teens,
Clad in a calico shirt and blue jeans,
On his leg a supple calf,
Fed on mush and milk, pork and beans,
He needs no staff.

She rising quickly said:

You must for Dr. Kingsley go.

I went and it was not long

Until the doctor was among

Some neighbors there—

Neighbors who had come along

Our grief to share.

Oh! if we would but take a thought,

And strive to share our neighbor's lot;

And with him grieve

On this memory we would place a blot

That would never leave.

The doctor walked up to the bed:

He felt the pulse and raised the head,

And said: "I don't know,"

And Mrs. McDonald while tears she shed,

Sobbed "poor little Joe."

And during that long winter's night

The doctor made a gallant fight,

Our son to save.

And with the morning's glorious light

He plucks him from an early grave.

Now, my friends, is it any wonder

That I should Dr. Kingsley honor?

And help him on.

He lost that night his eight hours slumber;

But saved my son.

Now, mothers kind and fathers all,

When sickness on your home do fall,

You may rest secure—

If you will on Dr. Kingsley call;
For he'll strive to cure.

I'll not say he can raise the dead:
Or if he tells the sick to pick up their bed
That they will walk.
But if he has the slightest thread,
It's death he'll balk.

DEDICATION OF CORNELIUS VILAS GUILD.

One day quite lately as I strolled,
Through the Madison capitol park,
I heard sweet sounds of music,
Which brought joy to my sorrowing heart.

I knew not from whence it came,
As through the air it shrilled,
I asked a stranger, he replied,
"They're dedicating Cornelius Vilas Guild."

"Cornelius Vilas was a maid
With unbounded kindness blest,
But Ah! she died and left us here,
And soared to her heavenly rest.

"While here on earth she expressed a wish,
That Grace church should have a Guild,
Her parents said they would fulfill that wish,
For one, it's they would build.

"Now the Guild is build, and on a Marble block,
As you pass through the door,
You may read this inscription carved thereon,
Cornelius Vilas Guild, eighteen ninety-four.

“Truly it is a handsome gift from a parent.
Yet we ought to thank our God,
Who imbued her mind with that noble thought,
And her tongue to speak the word.

Kind stranger, well I remember the day.

When my grief I could not smother,
When I saw Cornelius carried away
From a kind and indulgent mother.

I saw her father bent down with grief,
Every muscle in his frame did quiver,
As we laid her away with ceremonies brief,
Aye! Laid her away for ever.

And your joy of today, was begotten that way,
Begotten with sorrow unspoken,
For with a sigh and a moan they returned to their home
Their family circle riven and broken.

WEDDED BLISS.

Now, Jimmie, since you have a home,
And furnished with a pretty wife,
May success attend your every effort,
And live a long and happy wedded life.

May the first one born to this happy union
Be a bright and cooing boy,
That will make his father laugh with glee,
And his mother shed tears of joy.

And may he be a healthy child,
That'll give you little bother:
And when he to manhood grows—
Be wiser than his father.

Yet may he do as his father done,
Never to romp and roam:
But marry some true American lass,
And make another happy home.

May the second be a little maid,
With a rose upon her cheek—
That will run and play with this little boy,
At the old-time hide-and-seek.

May she live and be a comfort to you both,
In your declining years;
And when she takes a thought to wed—
Discard foreign dukes and peers.

Do, Jimmie, as her mother's done,
Her country ne'er disown:
But marry some true American lad,
And make another happy home.

Ah! this will make a happy voyage of life—
A pleasant sail from shore to shore:
Then laid away within the tomb,
To be seen by human eyes no more.

LITTLE JOE'S HOLIDAY GREETING.

A merry Christmas and a happy New Year!
To all my playmates and teacher dear,
And to all scholars far and near
May this holiday season bring good cheer,
And may Santa Claus be sure to come
With many nice presents to everyone:

And a great many more may we all live to see,
And with each return thank God on bended knee.
Always with thankful hearts our voices lift,
To Christ the giver of every good and precious gift.

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY.

Of the marriage of Jonnie Patton and his wife, Melvina Proud,
February 14, 1896.

Twenty years ago tonight,
The wedding bells rang clear and loud,
For that day Jonnie Patton got for his bride,
A sonsy lass, Melvina Proud.

And as twenty years have come and gone,
Today's their wedding china;
We've come to this, their happy home,
To shake hands with John and his Melvina.

We've come to this, their pleasant home,
And we make remarks—how fast does a family grow,
For here we have ample proof
That little cupid made no mistake twenty years ago.

We've come to this, their happy home,
To eat of the marriage feast once more,
And wish them health and happiness,
For at least another score.

Another score did you say?
To that I'll add ten,
This will bring us to their golden wedding day.
And again we hope to meet with them.

When this night's sport is through,
And towards home each one wends their way,
May we bow our heads and thank our God
For each blessing of this day.

APPRECIATION OF THE LADIES' AID.

Spoken November 27, 1895.

Ladies, since last with you I met,
The summer has come and gone,
And the longer night and the shorter day
Tell us winter's wearing on.

Though I've not with you met,
Still you've met at stated times,
And been very successful, this I know,
Gathering in the dimes.

The reason that I know so well
Was when you cut up that caper,
And appointed a committee of three
To go and buy paint and paper.

Mrs. Eben Collins she was one,
Mrs. J. P. Henderson another,
Then you appointed Maggie here,
Just Old Joe for to bother.

They came right here, they took my team,
And straight way went to Moe,
And the bargain that they made with him,
Would shame us men I know.

You were not satisfied with that,
For you an order gave,
That sheds around the church be built,
Our horses for to save.

The church is papered, painted, grained,
New steps put at the door.
The sheds are built to entice us there,
To meet with the God that you adore.

Now in behalf of the trustees,
Accept thanks for what you've done,
And may the blessing of our Lord
Be with you everyone.

ANNIE LYALL.

Of all the maid's that ere I knew,
None had so sweet a smile;
As a lass that lived in Verona,
And her name was Annie Lyall.

None knew her but to love her,
And if you were in her company awhile
You would find you was with an angel.
For one on earth was Annie Lyall.

But death the fell destroyer
On Annie he did smile,
He's always looking for the best,
And he withered Annie Lyall.

She died in the spring time of her life,
And in death wore that same soft smile

Which caused us all to love her,
And call her sweet Annie Lyall.

She is gone from her father and mother.
Her sisters and us all for awhile;
But in heaven we will meet her as an angel.
For one on earth was Annie Lyall.

TO THE MEMORY OF WM. OGILVIE.
[Dec. 7, 1894.]

Verona today is in mourning,
She needs no veil to cover her face,
For she has laid away in the grave yard
The foremost business man of the place.

For years Will Ogilvie was our stock man,
Bought our cattle, sheep and swine,
Paying the highest prices the market would afford.
We ne'er had cause to whine.

No more he'll be seen around the stock yards
With a short stick in his hand,
Stirring the heavy porkers around
To see if they can stand.

And then to get them on the scales,
You would hear his shrill sty-sty.
The hogs are on, and the gate is shut.
In the twinkling of an eye.

His scales were always right,
Balanced so fair and true,
Will Ogilvie ne'er wanted a pound
That rightfully belongs to you.

The Presbyterian church has lost a friend,
A main stay and a prop,
For every time the contribution box went round,
You could hear a quarter drop.

And when we had a special collection,
For missions foreign or at home,
A dollar he was sure to give,
To help the good work along.

We mourn with his aged mother,
His kind wife and family all,
But their true consolation must come through Him.
Who will not let a sparrow fall.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT BURNS.

Kind friends, it gives me great delight
To appear before you here tonight,
To say a word or two in praise,
Of that famous bard who first saw the light
On Scotland's sunny braes.

For the finest poetry we have today,
Its author was born in a hut of clay.
Roofed o'er with straw,
He ne'er did a college tuition pay
Or studied law.

He had for themes, a mouse, a louse and a daisy,
Told what Tam O'Shanter saw when he was dosey.
Gave Dr. Hornbrook a pill,
And near set the clergy crazy,
When he wrote his prayer for holy Will.

It was he who by chance did meet
On the banks of Ayre, mid snow and sleet,
An old man tired and worn
Who with uplifted hand and trembling feet [sands mourn!"]
Said "man's inhumanity to man, makes countless thou-

It was he who advised the youthful man
When about to leave his father's home, the world to scan.
"Conceal yourself, from critical dissection,
But keek thro' ev'ry other man,
Wi' sharp and sly inspection."

And while he plowed in chill November,
Upturned the mouse's nest as you'll remember.
And as it sped away down the furrow,
He spoke to it in words so kind and tender
So full of sorrow.

To see that little beast turned out of house and home,
On that bleak field to starve and roam,
With nothing now to build another,
From his tender heart there came a sigh, a moan,
As he would for an outcast brother.

'Twas him that we see on a New Year's morn,
Under his arm is a rip of corn,
A gift to his old mare Maggie,
And he said "many a mile swift you have me borne.
Sae there's a rip for thy old baggie."

'Twas he who owned an old pet sheep,
That one day got bothered about his feet,
With a hempen thether,
And it said "Hugh, run and to my master speak,
And for your pains you'll get my bladder."

It was he who mourned the daisy's fate,
Strove to save the flower, but it was too late.

Crushed and broken was its stem,
And he said "ruins stem plow share drives elate
On flowers and men."

He wrote us songs in the finest rhyme,
Gems sparkling like diamonds from a mine.
For years a constant flow
Of such beautiful thoughts, as Auld Lang Syne.
And John Anderson, my Joe.

For his Highland Mary a song he wrote
Which by lovers of song will ne'er be forgot.
Made the cotter before the peer to stand,
Yet satisfied with his humble lot
To till and plow the land.

One hundred years now have fled
Since he has been numbered with the dead.
Born, lived and died in an humble station.
Today his poetry is loved and read,
In every clime and nation.

There's not a Scott that breathe today,
From John O'Groot's to the river Tay,
Or from pole to pole upon which this sphere it turns.
But true homage they will pay
To their honest poet, Bobbie Burns.

SEAT 61.

[An extemporaneous poem addressed to Mr. Spaulding at his request to have Uncle Joe tell him the seat he occupied in the winter of '91 while in the assembly.]

First multiply six by ten,
And then you add a one;
If you compute this mathametical problem right,
You know the seat that old Joe sat upon.

The cane that's in that seat is stout and strong.
It's held up many a fool,
But Joe's the only one that ere rose up
And cried: "God bless our little school."

THE ROSTER TRIAL.

The first and last days.

PART I.

[four,
February twenty-sixth, the year eighteen hundred and ninety-
I took a trip to Madison, where I'd often been before,
To hear the famous Roster trial, a trial as you shall see.
Accusing some state officers of a foul conspiracy.

Judge Siebecker sat upon the bench,
His beard was shaved as clean as a bead.
He took a mallet in his hand, and says:
"Now, gentlemen, proceed."

John Olin for the plaintiffs,
The Tracy, Gibbs and Dows,
In the presenting of the case.
Took seven weary hours.

And at his side sat Jeffries,
A boy full of legal lore,
With a smile upon his honest face.
And his hair cut pompadour.

[plea
John Winans, for defendant Clark, said he would make his
When the evidence was all in, and the jury it would see
That he never tried for to defraud.
Or to **form** a conspiracy.

Governor Peck, with a face so bland.
Wears a mustache and **goatee**,
Flanders says: "Just wait a while;
There's no conspiracy."

LaFollette, Jones and Chynoweth,
They are men of learning deep,
They'll prove our Jim's so innocent
That the jurymen will weep.

To see such honest men brought into court
On such a terrible plea,
They'll prove the lads quite innocent
Of a foul conspiracy.

Senator Bashford and General Doe
Are the last on the list we see,
Lawyer Lamb says: "Wait a while:
There's no conspiracy."

These defendants are all men of worth.
Men that will live in history;
They'll prove to jury, judge and us all.
There's no conspiracy.

PART II.

For twelve long days this trial went on.

And the lawyers got no rest.

John Olin for the plaintiffs,

He did his level best.

But the lawyers for the defendants saw.

What John he could not see,

That it was beyond the power of mortal man.

To prove conspiracy.

They had McPhail upon the stand

For four and twenty hours,

With seventeen bright lawyers.

To test his mental powers.

He told about that roster job—

None knew as well as he—

But he never proved a single word

Of a foul conspiracy.

Colonel Bird was next put on the stand.

He told his story well,

He was the one who went across

And raised particular hell.

The Democrat people sent him o'er

To investigate the deal,

While Geo. Raymer swore, by the powers that be.

He'd make those fellows squeal.

"Now, Col. Bird," said Governor Peck,

"I've thought that matter o'er,

And the law relating to the same—

That contract is no more.

“The Democrat people over there,
Whom you do represent,
Of late with democratic government
Are very discontent.

“The people of this commonwealth
Elected me their chief,
And I’ll protect their treasury
From every pilfering thief.”

Then Flanders says: “A non-suit here!”
The judge, he says: “That’s right:
And, so far as I’m concerned,
This ends the legal fight.”

And turning to the jurymen
He thus to them did say:
“Gentlemen, your’e discharged;
Go down and get your pay.

“Go to your homes and families,
Make haste, then so to do,
And wishing a safe journey home,
I bid you all adieu.”

ON THE ROAD TO RILEY.

It was on the road to Riley,
Two farmers they did go,
The one was John McDonald:
The other Uncle Joe.

They had neighbored together for many a day
For thirty years or more:

They took a seat and began to talk,
How they'd vote in ninety-four.

Now, John, he was republican,
He was deep-dyed in the wool:
And Joe, he was a democrat
And a graduate from their school.

John says, "I've lived right here
For thirty years and ten.
And I would like, if you can explain to me,
Why so many idle men.

"The democrats they have been in power
For the last two years, or more,
And our laboring men are tramping 'round
Till their feet are tired and sore.

"Down at Pullman they had a strike,
Monopoly to over-throw,
They were drove back with the bayonet.
And the rest we all well know.

"Their ragged children are on the streets,
They beg from door to door,
And the mother with the babe at home,
Mourns till her heart is sore.

"The father, too, can get no work,
And nights he tramps the floor,
For to-morrow he is ordered out,
Monopoly locks the door.

"Starvation stares them in the face,
His children cry for bread,

And the mother's cheeks are crimson
With the tears that she has shed.

"Our factories they are all locked up,
Scarce one with an open door:
Don't you think we had better go and vote
Republican in ninety-four."

"Now, neighbor John, it's what you say.
I know is very true,
But that democracy is not at fault.
I'll prove this here to you.

"The republican party was in power
For twenty-five years or more,
And they put a tariff on all goods
That arrived upon our shore.

The merchants, they of other lands,
Held up their hands and swore,
They would never go again and trade
On America's protective shore.

"It built up factories here and there,
It made millionaires by the score,
With the high priced goods we had to buy.
They were driving us to the door.

"The wheat that we in the spring did sow,
And stacked with fingers sore,
Fifty cents a bushel was all we got,
For we could get no more.

“And Germany, too, against our pork,
Politely shut her door,
And two and a half was all we got,
In eighteen eighty-four.

“Our Congress has been figuring hard,
Until their heads are sore;
We’ll give the lads another chance,
And vote democratic in ninety-four.”

Now John he gave a little laugh,
And says, “I’ll tell you, Joe,
That song that you have just now sung,
Is the song of two years ago.

“Then the American people left their work,
And all went to the polls,
And told the Congress in plain words,
‘You must take off those tolls.’

“They have passed a bill and changed some things,
But that bill, now in the main,
Is just the old McKinley bill,
Enacted o’er again.

“But I’ll tell you what I’ve been thinking,
And I’ll propose this now to you,
That we’ll go and read up Populism,
And see what they intend to do.”

“Just what I’ve been thinking, John.
But don’t you hear the train?
We’ll have to hurry or we’ll be left,
We’ll talk this o’er again.”

It was when the equinox had passed us by,
And the sun was seen through a smoky sky:
It was when the acorns were falling from the trees,
With every gentle little breeze.

It was when the wild goose, that lays up no store,
Took wings again for a southern shore;
It was then those same two farmers they did meet,
And on an old log took a seat.

“Now, neighbor John, since last we met,
I’ve been studying hard to see,
If by voting for either old party,
How it would benefit you or me.

“Three years ago we were under republican rule,
And they on high protection stood;
Then we had the disgraceful Homestead riots,
And the shedding of human blood.

“The democrats took up the theme,
And from sea to sea did cry,
That the laboring men were being robbed,
And they knew the reason why.

“They claimed that under republican rule,
And the infamous McKinley bill,
It would ruin all our commerce,
And our homes with misery fill.

“Then the democrats went into power,
Got possession of the ship of state,
And now the misery in our land,
Is woeful to relate.

“We’ve had two years of democracy,
Two years of tariff reform,
And in every cottage in our land,
The laboring man does mourn.

“I’ll tell you, John, what we’ll have to do,
And we mean to do what’s right:
We’ll go and vote with the Populists,
We’ll then monopoly fight.”

“Now, Joe,” said John, “I’ve heard you say,
And you’ve said it well, my boy,
But the Populist party is very weak,
Trusts and monopolies to destroy.

“I know the party is young and weak,
Like a babe it scarce can walk;
But in November, as sure as we’re here,
It will be old enough to talk.

“And two years from now, mark what I say,
It will with corporations battle.
And in the strong arm of the laboring man,
Trusts and combinations throttle.

“I say again, what we must do,
And this we should remember,
To go and vote the Populist ticket straight,
On the sixth of next November.”

REASONS WHY.

We have no interest steals, no roster deals,
No Upham scrip to hide;
We have no Peck our ship to wreck,
On third term’s tempestuous tide.

Our ship will sail, though it blow a gale,
And in the harbor safely land,
Monopolists quail, when they see our sail,
And a solid labor band.

And farmers, too, will join our crew,
With their hands as hard as horn;
In monopoly's ranks they'll play some pranks,
They'd wish we'd ne'er been born.

In this land of ours we'll yet name the power,
That will give us laws that's right,
Monopolies crush and trusts we'll brush,
Into everlasting night.

TO A FRIEND.

Come, my friends, let us shout with glee,
And throw our hats high in air,
For Danny McDonald has got a bride,
One comely, young and fair.

One that was born in old Springdale,
She's not ashamed to milk the cow,
She'll feed the calf, and do the chores,
While Dan he tends the plow.

Dan, too, was born in this same town,
And he's a boy we all honor and respect,
The pretty lass he's got for a wife,
He'll ne'er dishonor or neglect.

And may kind fortune hover 'round
Their home both night and day.
And should misfortune strive to enter in.
She will instantly bar the way.

And when old age has crept along,
And placed his furrow'd stamp upon their brow.
May they ne'er have cause to regret that day in March
When they took the solemn marriage vow.

COMPOSED FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S CEN-
TENNIAL, FEBRUARY 12, 1909.

Arise, my countrymen, arise!
And honor Abraham Lincoln's name.
In churches and halls sing the praise
Of his never dying fame.

One hundred years now have fled,
Since he first saw the light of day;
And every true American, the world o'er,
Will to him homage pay.

Born of humble parents,
He rose to the highest station:
And when he died, he left us
A free and united nation.

IN MEMORIAM FOR JOHN M'DONALD.

April was drawn to a close:
Melted and gone the winter snows.
The rock lily shoots up and blows
 In purple hue.
It was then I lost a friend and, God knows,
 One kind and true.

Not only a friend to me, but a friend to all,
One ready to respond to a neighbor's call
When trouble would upon them fall,
 He would make haste to be there,
And with kindness, soothe the wormwood and the gall,
 To which the human flesh is heir.

Farewell to thee, my life-long friend!
Your noble life's now to an end,
A life to all I could commend;
 For during the seventy years you held the lease,
You strove and gained the glorious end,
 With your fellow men to live at peace.

In answer to a communication, which appeared in the Mt.
Horeb Times, telling how the girls of Verona, Mt. Horeb and
Black Earth kissed,—signed Country Jake.

Country Jake, for goodness' sake,
Why did you run by the Riley girl?
You should have flown the track, tried her a smack,
 Then told us how she made it whirl.

And Klevenville, too, past her you flew;
And she's one that wears a curl.
Next time you rhyme, take more time
And not offend such a pretty girl.

And Country Jake, while your hand I shake.
I'll tell you a truth you ought to know:
The girls of today, kiss the very same way
That their mothers did long, long ago.

JOHN McDONALD AND UNCLE JOE ON THE FINANCIAL QUESTION.

It was when March winds began to blow,
Each day the sun shone longer,
And though the ground was covered with ice and snow,
The atmosphere grew warmer.

It was in that month the year ninety-five,
When ice and slush prevails,
That John McDonald thought he would strive
To split some new oak rails.

He fell'd a dandy white oak tree,
And to butt it off he was not slow,
When who came along, him for to see,
But his old neighbor, Uncle Joe.

They had neighbor'd together near forty years,
Their friendship ne'er was broken,
Though troubl'd at times with their pigs and steers,
Not an angry word was spoken.

He came across to have a friendly smoke,
And a pleasant conversation,
To inquire for his health and the weal of his folk,
They met with this common place salutation.

Good morning, John, how do you do,
Are all the people well,
"Quite well, thanks, how is it with you,
Have you any news to tell?"

We're all quite well, I'm pleased to say,
All able to eat and drink,
The only news I have today
Is about our financial chink.

The American people are in a fever'd state,
About their silver coin
And how with gold that it should rate,
Pure bullion from the mine.

"Joe, you sit on that stump and take a rest,
While I sit on the beetle,
And tell me what you think is best,
For the poor American people.

"For 'tis plain to be seen there's something wrong,
In twelve months we've borrowed one hundred and twenty
million,
And at that rate it will not be long,
Until we'll owe a good round billion.

"Our President now has wrote a letter,
They call it sound finance,
There's nothing suits the 'gold bugs' better,
As 'round Wall street they hop and dance."

“They’ve had it printed by the score,
I, myself, I got a bundle,
They think the farmers need nothing more,
For to his views they’re sure to tumble.”

But just take the last sixty million loan,
They sold it for a dollar four,
And the sun had not six days shown,
When it was worth a straight eight million more.

And this they’ll call it sound finance,
And by such deals our debts will pay,
When any one can see at a glance,
We’re growing poorer day by day.

John, all legislation in our assembly halls,
Favors the man with gold,
And the poor, it makes no difference how he calls,
His interests always pigeon holed.

TO MR. AND MRS. NED GAFFNEY.
(Twenty-fifth Anniversary.)

Twenty-five years ago today
The solemn words were spoken,
Vows made, and time has rolled away,
Not one has e’er been broken.

Now we have come to your happy home
To eat of the marriage feast once more,
To shake your hands and wish you well,
Talk of the happy days of yore.

And should you both live another twenty-five,
As I hope and trust you may,
We'll come again to your happy home,
To celebrate your golden wedding day.

A day that only a favored few,
Who set sail on the matrimonial sea,
In health and strength, by the grace of God,
Are permitted for to see.

And now on bended knee,
And with clasped hands, let us pray
To the giver of every perfect gift.
For each blessing of this day.



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